

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PRS-01 RSC-01 (ISO) R

DRAFTED BY NEA/INS:DKUX:EI

APPROVED BY NEA/INS:DKUX

NEA/P - J. BRIGGS

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P 241405Z MAY 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 109231

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: OGEN

SUBJECT: CHICAGO TRIBUNE EDITORIAL

FOR AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN. REF: NEW DELHI 6828

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF MAY 22 CHICAGO TRIBUNE EDITORIAL

REQUESTED REFTEL. BEGIN TEXT: "WHOSE IS THE INDIAN

OCEAN?" "UNITED STATES PLANS TO CONVERT BRITAIN'S INDIAN

OCEAN ISLAND OF DIEGO GARCIA INTO A NAVAL BASE HAVE UN-

LOOSED SUCH A DELUGE OF CROCODILE TEARS THAT IF THEY ALL

FELL ON THE TINY LAND SPIT THEY WOULD SURELY INUNDATE IT.

"A MAJOR WEEPER IS THE SOVIET PARTY NEWSPAPER PRAVDA, WHICH
WAILS THAT THE AMERICAN ACTION IS A "DELIBERATE AGGRAVATION"
OF TENSION IN THE AREA. THE FACT IS THAT SOVIET WARSHIPS
HAVE BEEN RUNNING ALL OVER THE INDIAN OCEAN EVER SINCE
1968. IN CONTRAST, WE ARE JUST NOW BEGINNING TO MOVE
INTO THE AREA, EVEN THO WE ARE PARTIES TO THE SEATO AND
CENTO DEFENSE TREATIES AND THEREFORE HAVE A LEGITIMATE
ROLE IN THE REGION.

"ANOTHER CONSPICUOUS WEEPER IS INDIA, WHICH PROFESSES TO
REGRET THE INCREASED PRESENCE OF SUPERPOWERS IN THE OCEAN -
ALTHO SHE HAS GRANTED THE SOVIET NAVY PORT FACILITIES IN
HER OWN TERRITORY.

"A PANEL OF UNITED NATIONS EXPERTS GOT INTO THE WAILING
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ACT THIS MONTH BY EXPRESSING FEARS THAT THE US PLANS FOR

DIEGO GARCIA WOULD SET OFF AN ARMS RACE IN THE AREA AND WOULD DRIVE THE SOVIET UNION TO SEEK A SIMILAR BASE.

"THE PANEL'S TEARS FELL TOO LATE. THE SOVIETS STARTED THE RACE - ALBEIT A ONE-SIDED ONE - SIX YEARS AGO. IN 1971 ADM. JOHN S. MCCAIN JR., THEN UNITED STATES COMMANDER IN THE PACIFIC, WARNED THAT SINCE 1968 THE SOVIETS HAD BEEN SEEKING NAVAL BASES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN.

"THEY HAVE HAD A FAIR AMOUNT OF SUCCESS. THEY HAVE NAVAL PORT FACILITIES AT SOCOTRA ISLAND AT THE ADEN END OF THE RED SEA AND THE USE OF FACILITIES AT HODEIDA, YEMEN; MOGADISHU, SOMALIA; SINGAPORE; AND THE INDIAN-OWNED ANDAMAN ISLANDS.

"WHAT IS MORE, THE UNITED STATES IS NOT SHIFTING A POWER BALANCE. WE ARE MERELY TAKING UP SOME OF THE SLACK LEFT BY THE PULLOUT OF MUCH OF THE BRITISH FLEET FROM THE AREA "EAST OF SUEZ." THE RUSSIANS HAVE A VERY SELECTIVE CAPACITY FOR BEING SHOCKED. THEIR OWN WARSHIPS HAVE COME TO BE THE DOMINANT FORCE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. THEIR SUBMARINES OPERATE - WITH MISSILES - OFF THE US EAST COAST FROM STATIONS NEAR BERMUDA. THEY HAVE PENETRATED THE SANGEFJORD OF NORWAY. THEIR RESEARCH SHIPS HAVE BEEN DETECTED EXAMINING EVERY INCH OF THE SEA ROUTES AROUND THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE. THE SOVIET NAVY RANGES THE WORLD AND STICKS ITS NOSE INTO OTHER PEOPLES BUSINESS AT EVERY TURN.

"IT IS HARD TO SEE HOW WE CAN BE AGGRAVATING TENSION IN A NAVAL RACE IN WHICH WE ARE RUNNING A MISERABLY POOR SECOND. "

2. WE ARE CHECKING ON THE WASHINGTON POST STORY.

3. INDIAN EMBASSY ALSO PLANNING TO TAKE UP CHICAGO TRIBUNE EDITORIAL. RUSH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE109231
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: DKUX:EI
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740131-0188
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740519/aaaaaqjh.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: martinjw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 OCT 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 OCT 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <08 JAN 2003 by martinjw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHICAGO TRIBUNE EDITORIAL FOR AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN. REF: NEW DELHI 6828
TAGS: OGEN
To: NEW DELHI
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005